Synthesis of Nitrogen-Based Heterocycles via Multicomponent Reactions (MCRs) and Their Biological Evaluation

Synopsis

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University Department of Chemistry

B. N. Mandal University, Madhepura

By

Name: Vivek Kumar

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Exam Roll No.: CHE-07/23

Email: vkj565000@gmail.com

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Purpose and Need of the Study

Nitrogen-containing heterocycles are some of the most valuable structural frameworks in medicinal chemistry primarily because of the large presence of these in biologically activecompounds and approved drugs. At least one nitrogen-containing ring in nearly sixty percent of small-molecule therapeutics is represented as a key component of modern drug development. Nitrogen heterocycles are important because these rings readily engage in hydrogen bonding and π-stacking interactions, thereby enhancing both molecular binding and general bioavailability. Famed drugs frequently depend on such motifs like the pyrimidine core in anticancer drug 5-fluorouracil, the imidazole ring in the antibiotic metronidazole, the triazole for the antifungal fluconazole, and indole formation for the anti-inflammatory molecule indomethacin. Given the increasing global burden of cancer and infectious diseases, the investigation of novel heterocyclic scaffolds with therapeutic potential is of paramount importance. Cancer remains high on global mortality rates, with approximately ten million deaths observed in 2020, and an estimated 1.27 million deaths annually are also attributed to antimicrobial-resistant bacterial infections. These figures highlight the urgent need to develop new anticancer and antibacterial agents with improved efficacy. Conventional synthetic processes leading to the construction of complex heterocycles often involve lengthy multistep, repeat-purification procedures and substantial amounts of chemical waste. These conventional pathways are time consuming and resource-consuming, inhibiting the development of biologically feasible structural derivatives. Multicomponent reactions (MCRs) constitute an excellent alternative for the fast manufacture of complex heterocyclic systems using three or more starting materials in a single reaction. Such reactions provide very good atom economy reducing the number of synthetic steps and also stay closer to the green-chemistry principles and are less wasteful, much more efficient. One of the major merits of MCRs is that they provide the ability to synthesise many different molecular libraries in a short time which is highly advantageous for drug discovery and relationship study between structures and activity. In light of these advantages, a sustainable MCR-based approach to the discovery of novel

nitrogen-containing heterocycles is clearly appropriate. This method overcomes current challenges to the synthesis of heterocycles, simplifying the fabrication process and speeding up the synthesis of structural variants crucial in addressing issues like antibiotic resistance and aggressive types of cancer. The purpose of this study is the uniting of synthetic efficiency with medicinal value by generating novel nitrogen-rich heterocycles by MCR and investigating their anticancer and antibacterial effects looking for promising therapeutic candidates.

Detailed Description of the Project with Chapterization

The research study in this dissertation is developed through a series of linked chapters that provide a unified view on the theoretical, experimental, and experimental results in the synthesis of nitrogen-based heterocycles by multicomponent reaction and evaluation of their biological characteristic. Following is a summary of the structure of the dissertation:

1. Chapter 1: Introduction. This first chapter gives the background and purpose of the research. Its focus is on the development of heterocyclic compounds as key components of contemporary pharmaceuticals and the worldwide need for novel bioactive molecules. Key nitrogen ring systems—pyridines, quinolines, indoles, pyrimidines—are also discussedand the data demonstrate their application in therapeutic agents. The chapter presents theresearch problem and the urgent need for novel anticancer and antibacterial agents in view of the increasing prevalence of cancer and increased antibiotic resistance. It further presents multicomponent reactions as a modern, efficient synthetic tool, explaining briefly the reason for their use in this work. The objectives and working hypothesis are clearly stated to organize the chapters that follow.

2. Chapter Two: Literature Review. This chapter addresses the research that now existed inthe area of nitrogen-based heterocycles and their synthesis and the various synthetic methods of how it was produced by nitrogenic basis. First, it presents the existing biological functional properties of the major N-heterocycles as shown by the medicinal activities of the N-heterocycles, such as quinoline derivatives which act as topoisomerase inhibitors, indole compounds that inhibiting microtubule propagation and imidazole/triazole scaffolds that work to inhibit vital bacterial enzymes like DNA gyrase and dihydrofolate reductase. The article then proceeds with the discussion on well known

multicomponent reactions, including the Biginelli, Hantzsch, Ugi and Passerini protocols, which could lead to the discovery of structurally interesting heterocyclic structures in the future. Fundamental ideas of MCR chemistry like being effective, single-vessel reaction design, and suitable to environmental sensitivity are noted. The review also includes recent developments in green and medicinal chemistry such as solvent-free or catalyst-free MCRs and the application of MCR strategies to quickly produce chemical libraries for screening. The chapter ends with the review of the available knowledge gaps, such as the shallow structure–activity relationship data for synthesized MCR-based heterocycles which this study seeks to overcome.

3. Chapter 3: Green Multicomponent Synthesis of Nitrogen Heterocycles. This section introduces the experimental strategy and procedures employed to determine the experimental conditions in which to prepare the target heterocyclic scaffolds. It discusses why selected representative nitrogen-based frameworks—like dihydropyrimidinones usingBiginelli reaction-based synthesis and indole derivatives, by multicomponent based fabrication—were chosen for their prominence in biologically active compounds. These approaches take an ecological path: using solvent-free or green solvent systems and catalyst-free reactions; using energy efficiency methods in heating such as microwave irradiance. One example is an Ugi four-component condensation and cyclization for the formation of indole core direct from simple building blocks following the MCR in the light ofrecent mild and metal-free MCR method with ethanol. A detailed discussion of reaction techniques, rationale for choosing the reagents, and predicted yields is given. The chapter showed how MCR-mediated methods afford quick access to a large range of diverse nitrogen heterocycles in few steps and this significantly outperforms traditional multistep synthesis. Sustainability factors, such as atom economy and E-factor are also considered.

4. Chapter 4: Structural characterization of synthesized compounds. Identity, purity, and structural integrity of the synthesized heterocyclic compounds will be determined here. It outlines the analytical and spectroscopic techniques employed, such as FTIR spectroscopy to characterize functional groups, ^1H and ^13C NMR spectroscopy for validation of molecular structures and chemical environments, mass spectrometry for molecular weight determination, and CHN elemental analysis for confirmation of composition and purity. UV-Vis spectroscopy is used to investigate electronic properties

as a supplementary approach where applicable. Representative spectra are reported, and the main signals that support the successful heterocycle formation are summarized, such as a characteristic stretching of ureide carbonyl in FTIR or the loss of precursor peaks on NMR which confirms the formation of a dihydropyrimidinone ring being a successful one. Special observations, including tautomerism or other stereochemical features, get mentioned. Each synthesized compound is fully authenticated by the end of this chapter.

5. Biological Assessment and Assessing Heterocyclic Compounds (Chapter 5). In this section, biological screening of the compounds for anticancer and antibacterial activities is described. For the anticancer evaluation, the compounds are screened on a subset of human cancer cell lines (e.g., MCF-7, HeLa, and A549) with the MTT assay to determine IC_{50} values and doxorubicin serves as the reference standard. The antimicrobial activity against Gram-positive bacteria such as Staphylococcus aureus and Gram-negative bacteria such as Escherichia coli and Bacillus subtilis and Pseudomonas aeruginosa is investigated respectively. Agar well diffusion and/or broth microdilution schemes were employed to measure the zones of inhibition or the MICs such that ciprofloxacin was added as a positive control. The comparisons of all constituents are presented and the selectivity effects, including the better anticancer activity vs antibacterial activity, of the compounds are described. Results are consistently ordered and promising candidates are enumerated, where such active candidates are presented (e.g., $IC_{50} < 10$ μM or MIC < 20 μg/mL). Ethical and safety issues related to the tests are briefly introduced briefly, and when possible initial information about possible mechanisms of action is referred as soon as it appears.

6. Conclusions and structure of work. Biological findings and the structural characteristics of the designed molecules as reported and studied together in the last chapter prepare some initial structure–activity associations. Patterns are identified to understand which substituents or motifs enhance the biological activity of the target, such as whether hydrophobic aryl substituents or hydrogen-bond donors on the heterocycle boost anticancer activity or whether specific scaffolds such as indoles are superior to each other in antibacterial assays. These SAR results are confirmed by the comparison among the most and least active analogues. The final section of the paper summarizes the study's

general outcomes and comments on the expectation that newer heterocycles that possess significant anticancer and antibacterial activity would be found. Compounds with sub-micromolar cytotoxicity or potent antibacterial effects are identified as the potential leads to be developed from here. The sustainable nature of the synthetic technique is assessed based on the fact that the reduction in waste was achieved utilizing green solvents, solvent-free condition, and one-pot MCR protocols without loss on yield and purity. It ends with the critical examination of the scientific and practical significance of thework – that it displays as an expeditious and eco-friendly way to produce pharmacologically meaningful heterocycles – and identifies paths forward like optimizing active compounds, in vivo experimentation and a computational model in order to further understand of the structure–activity relationship.

Hypothesis

The working hypothesis is that environmentally sound multi-component reaction approaches will deliver a diverse array of anticancer and antibacterial structures through the synthesis of nitrogen-containing heterocycles. Therefore, the one-pot MCR methodologies will, in green conditions, produce new heterocyclic frameworks with remarkable biological activity against tumor cells, which are also highly potent against pathogenic bacterial strains by mutually reinforcing or synergistic modes of action.

Methodology

The research methodology is proposed as a series of three related steps that are well matched to accomplish the project objectives, and are in accordance with the principles of green chemistry:

1. Synthetic Phase – Green Multicomponent Synthesis:

New nitrogen-containing heterocycles will be prepared and designed in the first stage by means of three-component and four-component reactions. Available starting materials (e.g. aldehydes, amines, isocyanides, and β-dicarbonyl compounds) will be mixed to prepare the required frameworks with single-vessel multicomponent reactions. These reactions will occur under environmentally sound conditions (solvent-free systems or green solvents, ethanol and water; no hazardous reagents or catalysts). Microwave

irradiation is going to be used to boost reaction rates and efficiency. Utilizing these technologies minimizes waste, reduces energy use, and ensures high synthetic yields, underpinning the fundamentals of green chemistry. Thin-layer chromatography will be used to observe reaction progress, but products will be isolated via simple processes like filtration or extraction, reducing the requirement for complicated purification.

2. Characterization Phase – Structural Elucidation:

Key analytical techniques include FTIR spectroscopy for functional-group identification, ^1H and ^13C NMR spectroscopy confirming molecular architecture and stereochemical aspects, mass spectrometry for molecular weight and composition, followed by CHN elemental analysis and purity determination. UV–Visible spectroscopy, when relevant, willbe performed when electronic absorption characteristics apply to assess λ_max values. Wherever possible, single-crystal X-ray diffraction will be employed to establish the exactstructural identity for at least a representative compound. Interpreting such results, including characteristic IR bands, NMR chemical shifts, and molecular ion peaks, will guide analysis of data to support the accurate identification of each heterocycle prior to biological testing.

3. Biological Evaluation Phase – Anticancer and Antibacterial Assays:

After completion of characterization of the compounds, biological activities will be assessed. Anticancer effects will be explored with cultured human cancer cell lines including MCF-7, HeLa, and A549, using standard assays such as the MTT viability test. IC_{50}values will be established for each compound, with doxorubicin used as the reference control. The antibacterial activity will be tested on Gram-positive (Staphylococcus aureus) and Gram-negative (Escherichia coli) strains, as well as on Bacillus subtilis and Pseudomonas aeruginosa. Zones of inhibition will be determined by agar well diffusion, and minimum inhibitory concentrations obtained through broth microdilution. The reference antibiotic will be ciprofloxacin. All assays will be performed in triplicate to ensure reliability, then further analyzed statistically. Cytotoxicity to normal cells or selectivity indexes will also be evaluated to assess potential therapeutic value of eligible candidates.

The method systematically links each phase of development: green synthetic procedures to generate the desired compound, characterization to establish chemical identities, and biological assays to gain essential data for analysis of structure–activity relationships. Eco-sensitive methods are embedded among the synthetic workflow—under catalyst-free, low solvent, and one-pot MCR methodology—to enable the identification of biologically active heterocycles, yet in an environmentally sound and responsible manner.

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